

What is claimed is:

1. In a multimedia telecommunications network, a method of synchronizing network-based voicemail and multimedia mail messages with a wireless communications device and an external message recording device, the method comprising the steps of:

connecting the wireless communications device to the external device;

establishing a call between the wireless communications device and a voicemail/multimedia mail server in the network;

exchanging information between the wireless communications device and the voicemail/multimedia mail messages about the subscriber's messages, which messages may be stored on the external device and the voicemail/multimedia mail server;

determining the status of the subscriber's messages;

where there is at least one new message for the subscriber on the server, downloading any new messages to the external device and updating the server;

where there are no new messages for the subscriber on the server, playing a message for the subscriber indicating that there are no new messages;

where at least one message has been deleted by the subscriber using the external device, deleting any corresponding messages from the server;

where at least one message has been modified by the subscriber on the external device, uploading any modified messages to the server; and

releasing the call.

2. The method defined in claim 1, further comprising the step of activating the external device.

3. The method defined in claim 1, further comprising the step of disconnecting the wireless communications device from the external device.

4. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the voicemail/multimedia mail server includes a processor and a database for storing subscriber messages and other subscriber data.

5. The method defined in claim 1, further comprising the step of storing in a database at the voicemail/multimedia mail server a profile for the subscriber, the profile including a voicemail ID number; the subscriber's user ID and password; whether to delete all messages from the server after they have been downloaded to the external device; whether to keep the original message when a message has been modified; and whether to automatically synchronize at predetermined intervals.

6. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the network includes an IP Multimedia Subsystem for managing calls and administering packet switching for multimedia communications in the network.

7. The method defined in claim 2, further comprising the steps of:  
disconnecting the wireless communications device from the external device; and

storing in a database at the voicemail/multimedia mail server a profile for the subscriber, the profile including a voicemail ID number; the subscriber's user ID and password; whether to delete all messages from the server after they have been downloaded to the external device; whether to keep the original message when a

message has been modified; and whether to automatically synchronize at predetermined intervals.

8. The method defined in claim 7, wherein the network includes an IP Multimedia Subsystem for managing calls and administering packet switching for multimedia communications in the network.

9. The method defined in claim 7, wherein the external device includes a device control processor for directing the operation of the various functioning components of the external device, a loudspeaker for playing audio messages including voicemail messages and prompts, a message storage unit for storing voicemail and multimedia mail messages, which format may be analog or digital, and a visual screen for viewing multimedia mail messages, as well as prompts and text messages from the external device.

10. In a multimedia telecommunications network, a system for synchronizing network-based voicemail and multimedia mail messages with a wireless communications device and an external message recording device, the system comprising:

means for connecting the wireless communications device to the external device;

means for establishing a call between the wireless communications device and a voicemail/multimedia mail server in the network;

means for exchanging information between the wireless communications device and the voicemail/multimedia mail messages about the subscriber's messages,

which messages may be stored on the external device and the voicemail/multimedia mail server;

means for determining the status of the subscriber's messages;

means for downloading any new messages on the server to the external device and updating the server;

means for playing a message for the subscriber indicating that there are no new messages on the server;

means for uploading any modified messages to the server; and

means for releasing the call.

11. The system defined in claim 10, further comprising means for activating the external device.

12. The system defined in claim 10, further comprising means for disconnecting the wireless communications device from the external device.

13. The system defined in claim 10, wherein the voicemail/multimedia mail server includes a processor and a database for storing subscriber messages and other subscriber data.

14. The system defined in claim 10, further comprising a database at the voicemail/multimedia mail server for storing a profile for the subscriber, the profile including a voicemail ID number; the subscriber's user ID and password; whether to delete all messages from the server after they have been downloaded to the external device; whether to keep the original message when a message has been modified; and whether to automatically synchronize at predetermined intervals.

15. The system defined in claim 10, wherein the network includes an IP Multimedia Subsystem for managing calls and administering packet switching for multimedia communications in the network.

16. The system defined in claim 11, further comprising the steps of:  
means for disconnecting the wireless communications device from the external device; and  
a database at the voicemail/multimedia mail server for storing a profile for the subscriber, the profile including a voicemail ID number; the subscriber's user ID and password; whether to delete all messages from the server after they have been downloaded to the external device; whether to keep the original message when a message has been modified; and whether to automatically synchronize at predetermined intervals.

17. The system defined in claim 16, wherein the network includes an IP Multimedia Subsystem for managing calls and administering packet switching for multimedia communications in the network.

18. The system defined in claim 16, wherein the external device includes a device control processor for directing the operation of the various functioning components of the external device, a loudspeaker for playing audio messages including voicemail messages and prompts, a message storage unit for storing voicemail and multimedia mail messages, which format may be analog or digital, and a visual screen for viewing multimedia mail messages, as well as prompts and text messages from the external device.